



VIDEOTAPE SHOWS HOW TO PLAN SOBRIETY CHECKPOINTS

In response to requests from the law enforcement community, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Law Enforcement Television Network (LETN) have produced a videotape, *Sobriety Checkpoints*. The new videotape was developed from NHTSA's, *The Use of Sobriety Checkpoints for Impaired Driving Enforcement (1990)*, which presented law enforcement agencies with a uniform and successful method to plan, conduct, and evaluate sobriety checkpoints. The United States Supreme Court decision, *Michigan Department of State Police v. Sitz*, upheld the use of sobriety checkpoints to detect and apprehend impaired drivers as contributing to the public good. The information in the videotape and publication are consistent with the Supreme Court ruling.

Impaired driving and impaired-related crashes constitute one of the nation's leading health and injury problems. These events, many preventable, result in more deaths each year than from homicides in the United States.

Sobriety checkpoints maximize the deterrent effect of impaired driving laws and increase the perception of risk of motorists who might operate a vehicle while impaired by alcohol or other drugs. There is convincing evidence that checkpoints have a marked, dramatic effect on reducing alcohol-related crashes in a community.

The videotape discusses the four main elements for conducting sobriety checkpoints:

- *Guidelines* ■ *Briefing Guide*
- *Model Policy* ■ *Motorist Survey Questionnaire*

Guidelines

Before implementing a sobriety checkpoint, police administrators should consider certain issues to ensure that the checkpoints are used legally, effectively, and safely.

- Ongoing Program to Deter Impaired Driving
- Judicial Support
- Existing Department Policy
- Site Selection
- Special Warning Devices
- Visible Police Authority
- Chemical Testing Logistics
- Contingency Planning
- Detection and Investigation Techniques
- Operational Briefings
- Comprehensive Public Information and Public Education Programs
- Data Collection and Evaluation

Model Policy

This section of the videotape contains a model policy for the physical construction and operation of sobriety checkpoints. It was initially designed by individual law enforcement agencies to ensure standardization of sobriety checkpoint operations.

Briefing Guide

Before conducting a sobriety checkpoint, the law enforcement agency should conduct a briefing with all personnel who will be participating in the operation. The briefing guide covers the necessary elements for making sure that a checkpoint is legal, effective, and safe.



Motorist Survey Questionnaire

Measuring the reaction of the public to a sobriety checkpoint contributes to the success of the program to combat impaired driving. A short questionnaire given to drivers stopped at the checkpoint can provide these data quickly and easily. It's part of an effective public information and education program. This section suggests questions a law enforcement agency can use.

The regular use of sobriety checkpoints is an important part of a community's overall drunk and drugged driving enforcement program. Effective enforcement of impaired driving laws, combined

with swift and sure license removal, provide the most important elements for reducing alcohol-related crashes.

Checkpoints raise the perceived risk among drivers that those who choose to drive while impaired will be stopped and arrested.

Single copies of the videotape, *Sobriety Checkpoints*, are available on VHS by writing to James Onder, Police Traffic Services, NHTSA, NTS-41, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590, (202) 366-9785 or by sending a fax to (202) 366-7721.

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